Communications Monthly Tips

Updated monthly on the BWSR Communications Resources page, our monthly tips for more effective communications are archived here.

January 2015

Increase your email open and click rates with a subject line that works.

What makes you click on an email? Why do you finish it? It likely has to do with the fact that the subject line caught your attention. If you are sending out an email to a large group or important constituency, try brainstorming some creative subject lines that will pique readers' interest and make them want to read more. Here are four things to keep in mind:

- **Subject lines should be short and concise**—try to keep them under 50 characters if you can.
- **Highlight the email's value in the subject line**. People are more likely to open an email if they think it contains a useful resource. For instance, if you're doing a release on a pollinator program, you might use the subject line, "Save the Bees! (and other pollinators, too)
- **Start with active verbs** ("Learn" or "Register" for example) to make sure it's clear to your audience what action you want them to take via the email.
- **Use what you know about your audience** and speak directly to what matters to them (For example, "Fight Spring Flooding").

February 2015

Jargon: approach with caution.

It's very easy to rely on technical terms when you're communicating about conservation practices. One of the most important things to keep in mind is that your writing must be appropriate for your audience. You have to use terminology that makes sense to your readers. Sometimes you're communicating with a technical audience that speaks your language, but in many cases your audience is the general public and they're not going to know your shorthand or technical terms.

Explain jargon as you go along; or provide a glossary at the end of the document. Better yet, avoid jargon if at all possible.

March 2015

The Seven "C"s

Many professional communicators preach the gospel of the Seven Cs of Communication. Using these seven principles in your emails, your newsletters, and presentations will help you be stronger communicator.

- Clarity: Your messages need to be clear if you want them to be effective.
- Concrete: Be as specific as possible in your writing.
- Correct: Make sure you proofread your work, and catch any spelling, grammar, punctuation and format errors.
- Coherent: Do the different components of your communication connect with each other? Make sure your ideas flow from one to the next smoothly.

- Complete: Does your reader have all the information they need to make a decision or complete an action?
- Courteous: Tone is especially important when you are communicating through text. Keep your messaging as positive as possible even if you are talking about a potentially contentious issue.